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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2033

TAGS: KNNP EFIN PARM IR GM

SUBJECT: IRAN: GERMANY WELCOMES INFO ON ASSA CORP, EU MAY
ALSO ACT

REF: STATE 133198

Classified By: Acting Global Affairs Unit Chief David L. Fisher
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Germany's Ministry of Finance welcomed the information contained in reftel and the related press releases detailing Assa Corporation's actions as a front for Bank Melli's activities in the U.S. Finance Ministry Office Director Michael Findeisen was previously unaware of Assa's designation or their activities in the U.S. on behalf of Bank Melli.

¶2. (S) According to Findeisen, the European Council is considering adding Assa to the annexes implementing the EU's common position on UNSCR 1803. He stated that the Council's discussions on expanding the annexes were at an early stage and included "financial institutions" and "lots of names". He noted, however, that a majority of EU countries currently oppose expanding the annexes for reasons ranging from political to concern over the legal viability of such designations in light of the recent EU court rulings in favor of designated entities (NOTE: This is a reference to the December 4 EU Court of First Instance on the designation of the Mujaheddin-e Khalq. END NOTE.). Countries supporting expanding the annexes include Germany, France, the UK, Belgium, Finland, Poland and Italy, he said. Countries opposing expansion of the annexes include Austria, Spain and "smaller countries". Notably, Czechoslovakia, on the eve of assuming the EU presidency, supports the expansion, he said.

Koenig